

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH


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May 9, 2007

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM:  Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.
Director of Mental Health

SUBJECT: **PURCHASE ORDER SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH
WORKER EDUCATION & RESOURCES CENTER**

This memorandum is to inform your Board that we will be working with the Internal Services Department to execute a Purchase Order Services Agreement with the Worker Education & Resources Center (WERC). We will ask WERC to conduct focus groups and interviews with Department of Mental Health (DMH) employees in order to assess staff understanding and acceptance of the Recovery Model of patient care being implemented by DMH and to identify perceived systemic barriers to change that may impede implementation. The total amount of the Purchase Order will not exceed \$20,000, fully offset by Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funds.

In order to facilitate implementation of the MHSA Community Services and Supports (CSS) programs, DMH has established a training workgroup, consisting of DMH staff and representatives from the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 721. We are planning to expand this workgroup to include other union and staff representation, as needed. The task of this workgroup is to develop a comprehensive training program for DMH employees working in MHSA-funded programs and ensure coordination of Department-wide training efforts related to these programs.

We have identified WERC to provide these services because of its unique labor/management structure and relationship with the County. In December 2001, SEIU Local 660 (now Local 721) established WERC, a non-profit 501(c)(3) entity, to provide the vehicle for joint collaboration in the implementation of the County's Health Care Workforce Development Program (HCWDP), a labor/management workforce training component of the County's 1115 Medicaid Waiver Demonstration Project Extension. The Department of Health Services (DHS) has maintained an agreement with WERC, since Board adoption on June 11, 2002, to provide personnel to support DHS in the planning, design, and implementation of training and educational programs for DHS employees.

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Utilizing WERC to provide these services will further enhance labor/management collaboration in addressing County employee training needs, which will be critical in order to achieve successful implementation of MHSA programs.

We anticipate that focus groups and interviews will begin on May 21, 2007. The agreement will require WERC to provide a written report of evaluation and findings to DMH. This written report will be reviewed by the DMH training workgroup and the DMH Executive Management Team, and incorporated into the development of the comprehensive training program. Because of the anticipated volume and scope of training that may be needed, DMH expects to use various methods for conducting the training identified, including use of DMH Training Division staff, the DHR Learning Academy, and/or contract vendors, including WERC. Should WERC be identified to provide additional services, we will return to your Board for consideration of that Agreement.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me, or your staff may contact Sheila Shima, Chief Deputy Director, at (213) 738-4108.

MJS:SAS:tld

c: Chief Administrative Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Director of Personnel
Director of Internal Services Department